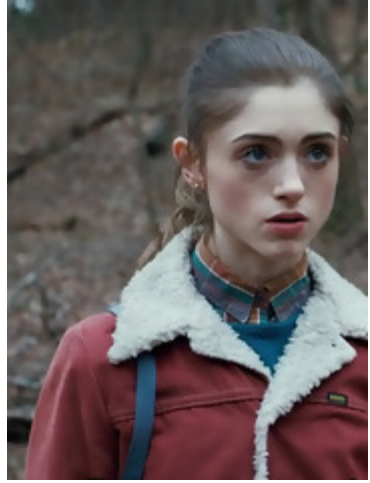

we tell each other everything by byzinha

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Summary: "Hey! No more secrets, okay? From now on we tell each other everything." / or the one in which Mike and Nancy actually do bond again. / 2 of 3, sort of follow up of "1985", followed by "they just like to fight"

1. Thanksgiving, 1983

Author's note: So, I initially planned on writing a long ass oneshot, but then I realized that it would be a really long oneshot, so I'm chapterizing the thing. Every chapter will be short and quick, snippets of conversations between Nancy and Mike. They will go from 1983 to 1986, so there will be some scenes from my fic "1985" in here, sort of. You'll see what I mean.

I hope you all enjoy it! ^^

The Stranger Things characters are not mine.
Beta'd by Jenna (littlecajunlady88).

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we tell each other everything

Thanksgiving, 1983

"I lied," Mike confessed in one go, just like that.

It was Thanksgiving, and for some reason he thought that it'd be a good date to put El's bed – *fort* – back together. He'd been postponing it for weeks now, and the Snow Ball was right around the corner. She might want to come back.

Nancy caught him in there. In fact, she came looking for him, because their mom was calling, and the basement was the first place she looked. Lucky.

Just like him, she also had been waking up in the middle of the night terrified from the nightmares. Her five minutes in the Upside-down were enough to have a taste of what Barbara went through, and the more she tried not to think about it, the more it haunted her.

So instead of mocking her little brother as the memo said, Nancy decided to help him. She didn't even say anything, just grabbed some pillows and tried to mimic what she remembered the fort looked like. They were almost finished when Mike said that, fingers fumbling with the channels of the walk talkie.

"I like Eleven. A lot," Mike continued, avoiding eye contact. Nancy nodded.

"Noticed."

He looked at her then. There was always a little warmth in his eyes when he talked about El.

"I kissed her. In the cafeteria, before the bad men showed up."

Nancy couldn't help but smile. Her little brother, acting all grown with his first crush. It was kind of cute.

"How was it?" she asked. From the look on his face, this was not at all what he expected from her.

"Nice, I guess," he answered. "I think she'd go to the dance with me if…" he stopped short. Everyone sort of agreed that there was more to the vanishing of Eleven. There had to be. "Maybe she'll come back."

Nancy got up, giving space for Mike to put the supercom wherever he wanted. He put it in the corner, next to Benny's shirt El was wearing when she arrived. It was a good thing the police gave back all the things the bad people had taken from their house.

"*NANCY! MICHAEL!*" they heard their mother call from upstairs. Maybe they really should go help.

The two siblings stood next to each other, and Nancy smiled sympathetically at Mike.

"I'm sure she will, Mike," she assured. Because he needed someone who believed in him. And because she believed too.

Together, they went up the stairs.

2. December 31, 1983

December 31, 1983

"So, what do you think it is?" Nancy asked Mike after she handed him the birthday present she got him. It was clearly a book, but she wanted to know if he could guess.

"The new Terry Brooks book?" he guessed, and Nancy needed all her self control not to roll her eyes.

"Fuck no, look at my face, Mike. This is quality reading. I'm introducing you to the brilliant mind of a woman of color."

Mike ripped the paper, already having a good guess of what it would be. Nancy had been *obsessed* with Maya Angelou for the past year.

"Didn't your friends give you that piece of white fantasy?" she wondered, observing him flip the pages of the brand new copy of *Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?* They were just a couple of hours from the new year, and Nancy had made sure to be the last person to give Mike his birthday present. He chuckled.

"That's exactly how Lucas described it," he answered, and then looked up at his sister. "Thanks, Nance."

She didn't leave his room right away, though. Nancy walked to his window and looked over the snow sheet that covered their backyard, and Steve helping their father set up the fireworks for later. Mike stood by her side. They were practically the same height now, he had grown so suddenly.

"Have any new year wishes?" he asked. Unlike her, he was looking beyond the power lines. Nancy sighed, turning her back to the window.

"That everything goes back to normal," she said, and it kind of sounded like a question. Mike just shook his head once.

"Yeah, that's not gonna happen," he stated. They knew.

They knew.

3. February 15, 1984

February 15, 1984

"So," Nancy said turning on the lights in the basement and startling the shit out of Mike. *What in the fuck.* "Make out party. Sounds interesting."

"Don't," Mike replied, trying to avoid that conversation. Why did they agree to talk more again?

"Come on, Mike," she insisted getting up to block the stairs, and he sighed. "Did you guys get pranked or something?"

"No."

"Well, then I couldn't've been that bad!"

"It wasn't," he said, which was true, but he was kind of hoping that a simple answer would make her quit. No such luck.

Nancy raised an eyebrow and Mike sighed.

"Dustin had a strategy," he started to tell her, giving up, and sat down on the old sofa. She sat by his side. "We went two at a time so we wouldn't *scare the girls off*, so Will and I went first."

"Did it work?" she asked, and there was *something* about the way she was oh, so interested, he was sure.

"Yeah. I kissed two girls."

Nancy's eyebrows went up. Was she really *that* surprised?

"Wow, way to go!"

Mike rolled his eyes. Fine, it hadn't been as bad an evening as he predicted, and he happened to land that bottle pointed at two of the prettiest 8th graders of Hawkins Middle – one of which he got to spend those 7 minutes in heaven with – but there was nothing big about it.

"We all got to kiss someone, but Will was the one who got really lucky," he continued. "Apparently, he's really cute?"

Nancy laughed.

"He is," she said. "Out of you bunch of nerds, he's always been."

Mike hummed.

"So if he's always been the cute one, why the sudden interest in him *now*?"

Nancy shrugged.

"Girls like layers, and there's nothing thicker than the near death experience."

Mike made a face.

"Women are so *weird*," he commented, making her laugh – genuinely laugh for the first time in *months*. "*Oh*," he breathed. "Wow."

Because really, *wow*. His big sister was back. Slowly, shyly, but back nonetheless. And it was incredible. Did that mean that he could be back too?

"Don't look at me like that!" Nancy said playfully messing with his hair, and for a change he didn't push her away. That seemed to catch her attention.

"How did you do that?" Mike wondered, and she looked at him confused. "Smile again."

Nancy's expression softened and she shrugged.

"I'm following your lead actually, little brother," she told him. "Didn't you notice?"

He didn't. Sometimes it seemed like he was in such a loop of memories and nightmares and hopes that he would never move forward, but maybe he was.

Mike looked over at El's fort. The ache of losing her and the certainty that she was out there somewhere didn't speak as loudly in his head as it did before. He still hoped, but it wasn't as excruciating anymore. Wherever El was, he knew she'd find her way back. She always did.

"Hey," Mike turned to Nancy again. "How was your date with Steve?"

Nancy, who had been observing Mike, suddenly avoided eye contact, which was suspicious.

"That's what you're trying to avoid," Mike pressed, eyes narrowed. "You're grilling me about middle school make out parties because you don't want to talk about *your* date!"

"*What*?" Nancy exclaimed. "That's *crazy*."

"So?" Mike pressed, lacing his fingers together and adopting a serious posture. Just last week, Nancy had been super excited about the date, and now she didn't want to talk about it? "What happened during *your* date, Nance?"

"I didn't... go," she said slowly.

"You were out the whole day," he replied frowning.

"I went somewhere, but not with Steve," Nancy told him. "I spent the day with Jonathan."

Mike's eyes widened.

"Oh, my God."

"It's not like that –" she quickly tried to explain.

"I was just beginning to *like* Steve! His presence wasn't a torture anymore."

"Mike-"

"And now you're cheating on him? With *Jonathan*?"

"I'm not cheating," she tried to explain. "It's complicated. I can't

believe you're defending Steve."

"Neither can I, really," Mike admitted. "I guess he's kinda cool."

"He's a good guy," she agreed and took a deep breath. "I'm not cheating."

"Don't tell me," Mike interrupted her. "I don't want to be your accomplice."

Nancy opened her mouth to protest, but thought better. She didn't know how to explain to him what was going on. Damn, she couldn't even explain to herself! So she didn't.

"Gee, you're such a heartbreaker," Mike shook his head, and Nancy sighed.

"That's bullshit," she replied, and he looked at her.

"Very mature."

Nancy rolled her eyes, and Mike shook his head again, but this time was less serious, more playful. That was nice, those moments of camaraderie with her. It was good they decided to talk again.

4. Spring break, 1984

Author's note: Thanks NocturneSky for your reviews! And for everyone who's reading, thank you so much. I'll try to post every couple of days ^^ I hope you enjoy this chapter, and leave a review at the end, please! :D

Spring break, 1984

That new campaign was so hard to write that at some point Mike just wanted an excuse to do something else, so it was a relief when Nancy entered the basement and dropped a black plastic bag on his lap.

"What's this?" he asked, despite the fact that he could guess it was a magazine.

"Quality reading," Nancy answered, already stepping back. Mike opened the bag to see which magazine it was, but then closed it right away.

"Holy fuck!"

"I marked a page," Nancy said. It was clear that she was trying to keep a straight face.

Mike looked over to the door and then the stairs to make sure that no one was lurking before he dared to peak at the cover again.

"It's a fucking *Playboy*!" he hissed at Nancy, who avoided eye contact. "You're giving me porn!"

"The page," she insisted, no point in trying not to blush now.

Mike raised an eyebrow as he pulled the magazine from the bag and started to go through its pages, admittedly slower than necessary.

"A fucking porn magazine," he mumbled, and felt his cheeks get warmer at each graphic photo. "You're giving me porn with the excuse to make me read an article. I thought only brothers did that. I mean, that's what Dustin's brothers do, I never expected-" Mike

reached the marked page right when he heard the creak of the stairs, so he looked up and saw Nancy trying to sneak out. She grinned.

"So you did have your hands on one of those before," she deflected, and Mike felt his face burn.

"Yeah," he replied looking down, and then frowned at the title of the article. "Polyamory?" Mike said out loud. "For real?"

"It's interesting," Nancy shrugged.

"You didn't just happen to come across a polyamory article in the middle of a *Playboy*!"

Now it was Nancy's turn to blush.

"No," she said. "Steve did, so he showed it to Jonathan, who showed it to me."

"Please, stop talking."

"It's really interesting, I swear," she insisted. Mike closed the magazine.

"Why are you giving this to me?" he asked, hoping for some sincerity.

"I told you, it's quality reading. It might help you understand," Nancy answered. She sounded sincere. "Also, the guys say a boy should have his magazines."

"Jesus Christ, Nancy," Mike covered his face.

"If you don't want it, you can give it back," she suggested, and he quickly hid the magazine behind his back.

"I never said that," he said, and Nancy smiled.

"If father ever knew, he'd be *so proud*!" she mocked, and Mike rolled his eyes. "Read the article, Mike."

"Yeah, whatever," he replied under his breath, and took the magazine out from behind him. Nancy left him alone with it, and you can say

the campaign was forgotten for a while.

5. May, 1984

May, 1984

"You heard about the Spring Ball?" Mike asked after he got some scoops of ice cream for Holly and himself and sat down.

"Ladies choice?" replied Nancy leaning against the sink, and he nodded.

"I got asked to the dance," he told her, and she smiled. "Have you met Hilary Stone?"

"Stone?" interrupted Steve, walking into the kitchen with a tempting and absurdly cold bottle of Coke that made Holly's eyes shine. "I heard the Stones are moving to Atlanta this summer."

"Yeah, Hilary told me," Mike nodded. Nancy still seemed to be trying to remember who the Stones were. "She's in the school band with me."

"Is she the one with the tuba or…" Steve thought out loud as he put some Coke in a cup for Holly. The girl drank half of it in one go and put the rest in her ice cream bowl.

"The flute," Mike corrected, and only then Nancy seemed to catch on.

"Oh, from the Talented Stone Siblings!" she exclaimed. "Wow, Mike, she's cute!"

"She's one of the girls I kissed at that party," he overshared, and Steve looked impressed.

Mike hadn't told Nancy which girls he had kissed that night, in part because he knew she wouldn't remember them, but in part it was because it felt a little surreal. And now Hilary had trapped him after the band's rehearsal and asked him to the dance before she stole a kiss from him and he kind of didn't know what to do.

"So, what are the plans?" asked Steve, oddly more interested than anyone else.

"I don't know, I don't even know if I'll go," Mike answered. Steve and Nancy looked at him with confusion. Holly enjoyed her ice cream. "I didn't exactly say yes. Not much space to talk with her tongue in my mouth."

Nancy and Steve looked at him with raised eyebrows.

"She's into you, dude," Steve stated. "That's a chance you won't want to miss."

Mike sighed.

"I don't know, it's weird…"

"You really should go, Mike. You already missed the Snow Ball last year," Nancy reminded him, and that was really something he didn't want to think about.

In fact, that was the exact reason why he wasn't very eager to go to any dance at all, even if his friends were insisting that he should go. Nancy seemed to notice her slip right away, but Steve had no idea.

"Mikey," he said, getting closer and resting a hand on Mike's shoulder. "Don't miss that opportunity, man, I'm telling you. Hilary digs you, you should go for it. Besides, she'll be gone in less than two months, what do *you* have to lose."

Mike looked at Nancy and it seemed like she understood the struggle. Damn, she had been with him every other night looking for gates in the woods just in case-

It was stupid, really. Because he knew that Eleven was one of those things that only happened at the right moment, and that meant that his definition of 'right moment' never was the same as hers. Yet, he always wished she'd show up, like *right now*.

"I know what you can lose," Nancy said breaking the silence. "That goddamn haircut, it's outdated."

Steve's face lit up.

"Yeah, man! John Lennon called, he wants his hairstyle back," he

joked. Mike just looked annoyed. "Dude, you're a musician, an *artist*. You must look the part. Come on, Mikey, I know the right place for you to *reinvent*."

That was so dramatic. Mike looked over at Nancy, who smiled and nodded reassuringly. Maybe that dance wouldn't be such a terrible idea, like the make out party wasn't. Who knows? Steve was somehow right, Mike had to seek opportunities. He sighed, and then turned to Steve.

"Don't call me 'Mikey'," he said, and the older guy shrugged. "Fine, I guess I will go."

Nancy didn't say it right away, but she thought that this was a good thing for Mike. Sometimes, after a heartbreak, all you need is a little change. Not that she didn't like to go help him look for Eleven, it sort of was her own personal closure for Barb too, it was just that he truly deserved good things, and maybe this was it.

Time would tell.

6. June 17, 1984

June 17, 1984

"*What the hell did you do?*" Chief Hopper demanded, storming into the middle of Will's birthday. They all looked at each other in confusion. "Did you try to break in the laboratories again?"

Silence. And then-

"No!" some exclaimed. Mike and Nancy exchanged a look that didn't go unnoticed to the cop.

"Wheelers!" he practically shouted, making the siblings freeze. "Spill it."

They stood there, staring at Hopper with a mix of fear and worry, and a lack of words. The Chief grew impatient.

"Why?" asked Dustin. "What happened?"

"I asked first."

"Hop, come on," Joyce tried to interfere, but he was so serious and worried that she turned to the Wheeler siblings again. "Do you know anything?"

Oh, they knew *a lot* about a lot of things, but Hop had betrayed them before. Who was to say that he wouldn't go Lando again?

"Just tell him," Will said, voice coldly calm. "You didn't do anything wrong."

Well, that was true.

Nancy and Mike looked at each other and she raised an eyebrow indicating that *he* should do the talking.

"We didn't break in, if that's what you wanna know," said Mike deflecting a little.

"But you did something," insisted the Chief. "What was it?"

"Hop-" Jonathan tried to reason.

"*What did you do?*"

"We were looking for gates, okay?" exclaimed Nancy. "Like the one Jonathan and I found when the demogorgon was around. We thought that maybe, if we found a way…"

"You shouldn't have done that," Hopper said nervously, taking off his hat and covering his face with his other hand.

"Why not?" Mike tried to know, but the Chief seemed defeated as he sat down.

"Those fuckers," he mumbled. "They are going to close everything."

Nancy stood up and got closer to Hopper.

"Who is 'they'?" she asked, even though they could have a good guess. "Government?"

Hopper's hat fell on the floor, and he covered his face with both hands.

"If they close everything, how will she -" he mumbled.

"Wait, do you know where the gates are?" Mike asked getting up too. "You know where Eleven is?"

"I don't, kid," Hopper said, too defeated to lie. "I…" he sighed, and looked up at them. Not only Mike and Nancy were looking at him, but everyone else too. "Breeches. Not gates, breeches. And they are actual living things with their own consciousness. They are going to close all of them."

"Well, then let's go stop them!" Nancy exclaimed. "They refused to bring out Barb's body even though it could be done, and now they are not even giving us a chance to find them?"

"No, Nancy. Listen to me," Hopper stood up again. He was so

massively bigger than most of them. "You guys nosing around are the reason why they came down here in the first place. I don't want *any of you* going *near* that place ever again, you hear me?"

He turned around, facing everyone seriously. He was intimidating.

"Understand, Michael?"

Mike inhaled a sharp breath, and then nodded with displeasure.

"*I'm* going to fix this," the Chief guaranteed as he fished his hat from the floor and headed to the door. He stopped with his hand on the handle and turned around one more time. "Happy birthday, Will."

He left, and everyone just stood there for a while thinking, fearing, daring.

Maybe there was hope.

7. July, 1984

Author's note: There's no way in hell I'd miss this opportunity. Hope you enjoy this one. Thanks for the reviews.

July, 1984

Collages. So many things to do, so much stuff to think about, and Mike was in the living room with his baby sister making collages in the middle of a heat wave. What a life.

"Glue," Holly demanded handing him a piece of magazine.

His duty was to make sure that she was using the scissors correctly and not eating any of those materials, and Holly was making sure to abuse him a little. That bossy 4 year old.

Mike put some glue on the back of the paper, and she happily glued it to her poster.

"Are you sure you need to start the Halloween preparation now?" he asked, and Holly barely glanced over at him.

"I'm sure, Mike," she answered very seriously, choosing one of the kids magazines that were on the coffee table and going through its pages one more time.

Those were old magazines that she found in the basement. No one in that house had any idea how Holly decided that she loved Halloween, but hey? Everyone had a favorite holiday, right? Mike's was New Years Eve, mostly because it also was his birthday, and even though Mardi Gras was not big in Indiana, it was in New Orleans, where their uncle on their mother's side lived, and Nancy fell in love with it when she was seven.

Holly looked hard at one of the pictures, and then at Mike three or four times before she nodded and picked up the scissors again to start cutting.

"Why the Muppets?" he asked then, and she smiled.

"Because it's the best show," she exclaimed with shiny blue eyes.

"You don't even *understand* it," Nancy said from the door, arms crossed. Holly looked at her.

"Of course I understand!" she protested rather offended. Mike shook his head.

"You think so, but you *really don't*," he said. "Trust me."

"Yeah, not even Mike gets it," Nancy provoked, and he threw a pillow at her. He missed by a really long distance, it was embarrassing.

"I do! Mostly," he said. Holly rolled her eyes and went back to cutting. They guessed that TV shows looked a lot simpler when you're a toddler and you don't have the pressure to understand all the hidden meanings behind everything.

She already had put in her collage Miss Piggy, Kermit the Frog and Fozzie Bear; they all knew that Fozzie was her favorite character, so they only had to wait and see who they'd have to be.

Nancy walked closer and sat on the sofa behind Mike. The three siblings stayed there in silence, older kids helping and watching the younger cut and glue the figures of Gonzo and Animal next to Fozzie.

"Hey," Nancy called with a hushed tone, even though Holly could obviously hear her. "Did you notice something weird in the air?"

Mike turned to look at her, a questioning raised eyebrow.

"You know you gotta be more specific, Nance. This is Hawkins," he observed, and she shrugged.

"Ever since the breeches were closed, it's like…"

"Things are off?" Mike completed, and Nancy nodded. "It's funny, because technically the breeches were disrupting the force – or whatever you wanna call it – but now it seems like we're in greater danger than before. And by 'curious' I mean-"

"Total shit?" Nancy completed.

That pretty much summed it.

"Maybe," Holly said, all her focus on making the letters with pink crayon over Miss Piggy's figure, the crooked M looking rather charming. "It had something to do with that green stuff Will's coughing out."

Mike and Nancy both looked down at their younger sister and then at each other.

"Like the person in his wall," she continued, finishing writing 'MOM' and switching for a green crayon.

"I thought you'd forgotten that already," Mike commented. "It was last year."

Holly just shook her head.

"How do you write A?" she asked, and Nancy showed her how to make the uppercase letter in the blank space of a coloring book.

"I do have a feeling Will is hiding something," Mike admitted. Nancy agreed.

"Jonathan thinks the same," she said. "He said he's been keeping an eye on Will since he came back, and things are weird, but stable."

Mike hummed, and watched Holly write her own name in yellow above Fozzie, as suspected. With Kermit being their dad, the options were narrowing down. Outside, they heard and felt the floor tremble with a thunder. Rain, at last.

Mike wondered how Eleven was handling it.

Holly exchanged her crayon again, this time picking a blue one. Her name was the one written more neatly, being the one she had practiced more. They watched with expectation as she drew the first lines above Gonzo's picture, and Nancy burst out laughing when she completed the M.

"Gonzo?" Mike protested. "Really?"

Holly looked down at her poster, and then at Mike, repeated the gesture once and then reached out to her brother's face, making him look at her and then stay in his profile. Finally, she nodded.

"Yes, really," she concluded making Nancy laugh even harder.

"What are you laughing about?" he confronted Nancy. "That leaves you as Animal."

"I bet I can rock as a redhead and some rocker clothes," she pondered, and this time Holly laughed.

That evil tiny baby had a plan in mind, and her older siblings were beginning to fear her.

8. September, 1984

September, 1984

Okay, that felt reckless – Nancy thought as Jonathan kissed down her neck. Like holy-fucking-good reckless, to be honest. So wrong and so utterly right. *That*, she thought, *was the life*.

Except-

"HOLY SHIT!" a boy's voice exclaimed as the basement door was opened. Dustin.

"Oh, fuck no!" Mike said after, walking ahead of his friends, and Nancy and Jonathan furiously tried to untangle.

Maybe it wasn't a good idea to choose to stay in the basement.

"Not in *my* basement!" Mike protested, keeping a safe distance. His face was a mix of disgust and utter disbelief.

"Basement is not *yours*, Mike," Nancy replied still a little flushed. Jonathan was already up and talking about nothing with Will.

"Oh, do you need some time to rephrase that?"

Okay, let's be real, the basement was *basically* his. The way the living room was their father's and the dinner table was Holly's.

"Weren't you going to stay at Dustin's today?"

"The Solaris are remodeling their pool," Dustin answered, looking more at Nancy's rack than her eyes. "It's so fucking loud, we couldn't even think."

"I don't think I can think here either, now," Lucas commented, even though he was being quite the gentleman and had turned his back to her.

Mike rolled his eyes, and then he saw that Dustin was still staring, so he punched him in the shoulder.

Nancy sighed and buttoned one more up. Damn 13 year old boys.

"Don't worry," she said standing up and taking Jonathan's hand. "We're going to my room."

Mike closed his eyes annoyed, and Jonathan even waved a goodbye at the boys.

"You know your baby sister punches harder than you, right?" Nancy still heard Dustin say before she was out of earshot.

"And *you* are a perv," Mike replied, walking to the couch, but he stopped short, thinking twice before sitting there. Instead, he chose one of the chairs.

"Look," Will argued. "It's not our fault your sister is hot."

Mike looked at each of them disgusted, leaving Will last.

"*Et tu, Byers?*" he said betrayed, and his friends rolled their eyes.

They all sat around their D&D table and got their books. First month of classes and school already was biting their asses.

Their study session didn't last long, though. Twenty minutes in, the moaning got too loud and they just gave up and went downtown to look at bikes and, in Mike's case, try a couple of electric guitars. They weren't mowing so many lawns to keep that money intact after all.

9. Christmas, 1984

Christmas, 1984

After the Christmas supper, and all the gifts exchanged, and carols and French toasts in the middle of the night, and Holly sleeping in his arms because a copy of Captain Marvel put him on the top of her list of favorite people; after all of that and putting Holly in bed and the neighborhood getting quieter along with their house, and the walkie-talkie finally stopping with the noise, Mike found Nancy sitting by her open window and decided to join her.

It didn't snow that year, but there was a thin layer of ice everywhere that had their relatives confined in the Indianapolis' airport.

"I told mom we should've gone to New Orleans instead of them coming here," Nancy said looking out the window and up at the sky. It was a clear night, full of stars.

"I bet uncle Klay thinks the same now," Mike added, making Nancy smile.

She gave him space and he sat by her side. On a warm day, they'd go out her window and lay on the garage's roof to watch the stars, but that was a long time ago, even a couple of years *before* the demogorgon. It was always nice, because Nancy knew *a lot* about constellations and Mike always learned something. He kind of missed that.

"I can't believe we survived this hell of a year," Nancy sighed.

"It managed to be even crazier than last year," Mike agreed rubbing his eyes.

They were tired, but hyped, and sleep was not an option, not yet.

Both siblings looked out the window again, even though they didn't exactly look at each other during their brief exchange. The chilled air settled in the room.

"You still like astronomy?" asked Mike, and Nancy smiled.

"Yeah…" she sighed, and stuck her head out the window. "Wow, it's been a while. Do you have a compass?"

Mike scoffed.

"You telling me you can't guide yourself through *the stars*?" he mocked, and she rolled her eyes.

"I'm out of practice, dumbass," Nancy replied, trying to make sense of the sky. It was such a beautiful night.

"I have some, but they're all downstairs."

Nancy turned around, resting her head on the windowsill. It was an awkward position, but less freezing than sitting on the roof. It took her a couple of seconds to finally find herself.

"No, never mind!" she exclaimed, right when Mike finally got up. "Come here."

He mirrored her position, both siblings shoulder to shoulder to look outside.

"You see Leo?" Nancy pointed, and after some concentration, Mike found it too, right next to the moon.

"Yeah, I see it," Mike replied, smiling a bit.

"Can you find Hercules?"

He looked at Nancy, but she had her eyes on the sky, so he looked up again too and nodded, looking for the constellation. He just had to remember the sequence and follow it – Virgo, Ursa Major, Big Bootes, the Corona Borealis and… *there* it was. Hercules.

"There," Mike pointed, and he could practically feel the pride coming from Nancy.

They just laid there for a few minutes feeling their noses freeze and contemplating the stars in silence, and then Mike remembered something.

"What happened to your telescope?" he asked, frowning at the Corona Borealis.

"Loaned it to Barb, like… three years ago," Nancy answered. "Never got it back."

"Not even…" Mike started, and she shook her head.

"Nope," Nancy replied, popping the last syllable, and right after that a shooting star crossed the sky, making her gasp and hold Mike's wrist. "You saw that? Make a wish."

"I saw it," he said, surprised with how tightly she was holding his wrist. "Can we wish upon the same star?"

"Damn right, we can," Nancy said, a little out of breath.

It had been such a hard year for both of them. A wish would come in handy now.

"Did you make your wish?" she asked.

He did. So did she.

That position was painful.

"You know what Dustin's brother once told us?"

"Which brother? Grant, the hippie?"

Mike chuckled and sat straight, done with the stars already. Nancy did the same.

"That one," he said, laughing. "He told us that things tend to get bad before they get good."

Nancy nodded. That was a good saying, she'd heard it before.

"You think it can get worse than this year?" she wondered, and he shook his head just once.

"I think we'll finally be fine," Mike told her. It kind of had to do with his wish, kind of had to do with the noisy walkie-talkies and weird

compasses. But he didn't go into details with her. He just had a feeling.

Mike stood up.

"Good night, Nance," he said. "Merry Christmas."

Nancy smiled looking up at him, and watched him leave to his room.

"Merry Christmas, Mike," she replied when he was almost out of earshot, hoping that he was right.

10. January, 1985

January, 1985

"Good Lord, Michael, where that appetite came from?" their mother asked during dinner. Mike was surprisingly hungry that night; normally he'd only eat as much as Holly. No wonder he was so skinny.

"Love makes miracles," Nancy mumbled to her fork, but everyone heard her.

"What did you say?" their mom asked at the same time Mike said- "Shut up!"

Nancy smiled.

"Mike's girlfriend is back," she told everyone.

Both their parents looked confused, but Holly just exclaimed "Mike has a *girlfriend*?!" It was kind of cute.

"She's not," he started and then shook his head. "I don't have a girlfriend."

"I didn't hear anything about the Stones being back in town," their father commented, genuine confusion in his voice, and Mike made a face. He and Hilary Stone were far from being a couple.

"One dumb school dance does not make Hilston my girlfriend, dad," Mike argued. His father said something about how stupid that nickname was, but Mike talked over him. "And I don't talk to her since she left."

Teddy frowned.

"Then you're a crappy friend," he accused, causing Karen to protest.

"You don't get to tell me what kind of friend I am!" Mike exclaimed offended.

"You take that back right now, Teddy!" Karen said at the same time. "Your son is nothing but loyal to his friends, and he has no obligation to talk to any girl."

"Thank you, mom," he sassed and then turned to his father. "See? Mom *knows* me. You don't."

"Michael, don't press it," his mom warned.

"This is bullshit," he complained, feeling the hunger wave disappear. "Dad doesn't even *try*."

"Mike," Nancy called in an oddly calm tone that caught his attention. He looked at her and she shook her head, and then he looked at Holly, who seemed a little scared of yet another table fight.

For once, he dropped it.

"She's not my girlfriend, Hol," he said instead to his baby sister. "Just a girl who is a friend. She had to leave for a while, but finally came back. Her name is El. I will introduce you to her later, okay?"

"Elle?" his mom asked. "Eleven?"

They guessed that they couldn't expect her to forget that time when a girl snuck into their basement for a week. Mike and Nancy nodded.

"She's staying at Hopper's," Nancy told her. "I was helping Joyce buy some clothes for her today."

Karen nodded. She was probably relieved that there wasn't a kid hidden in her house anymore. Nancy turned to Mike.

"I'm sorry I didn't tell you about her before, she asked-"

"It's okay," he shook his head. He wouldn't hold it against them. The important part was that El was back. Nancy smiled.

"Bad before good, right?" she observed, and Mike nodded.

"Damn right."

11. April Fool's Day, 1985

April Fool's Day, 1985

"What the hell happened to you?" asked Nancy, suddenly walking slower. She, Jonathan and Steve were crossing the street towards Hawkins Middle to talk to the kids, and found them sitting at one of the patio tables eating chocolate cake, each one with a spoon. They were also all wet.

"Get a spoon, guys!" Dustin offered, making space for the teens. "Look, I got a copy of *Monty Python*!" he showed the VHS to Jonathan, who ruffled his hair.

"I guess my contact came through then," Jonathan said, turning to Will.

"It was really useful, Jon, thank you," Mike said nodding.

Each teen got a spoon too and sat at the table with them. Half of the cake was already gone, but they supposed the kids didn't eat it like this from the beginning, there probably had been a "Happy Birthday" and paper plates at some point of that afternoon.

"No one answered *my* question, though," Nancy insisted, analyzing her bite of cake. Her mom had baked it the previous night, and it was black with a delicious and sugary icing. "Why are you all wet?"

She looked at each one of them. El's brown hair was drying all knotty, so Nancy made a mental note to give her some tips on how to unknot it more smoothly.

"There was a lazy river in school!" Lucas explained excitedly.

"A *lazy river*?" echoed Steve. "As in like a water park?"

"Yes," all the boys answered at the same time. El ate more cake. Girl had an appetite.

"That's impossible," Jonathan reasoned.

"It was a prank," Will half-explained.

"Still impossible," Steve argued.

"Not when you have El," Dustin said, mouth full, and all eyes went to Eleven. Jonathan had sat between her and Lucas, and frowned at her. That explained why she was so hungry, she was recovering her energy. El just smiled.

"Do I want to know the details?" Nancy asked, and the kids shrugged.

"Maybe," Dustin said after he swallowed. "But I can tell you guys all about it when we're on neutral ground," he whispered the last couple of words for drama's sake.

Nancy looked at Jonathan, who looked at Steve, and then they both looked at Nancy, who finally shook her head and put something on the table next to the cake. It was an old yearbook.

"Okay, later," she agreed. "We came here because you guys *have* to see this."

"High school yearbook, so incredible," Mike joked, but Jonathan started flipping the pages.

"No, it really is," he said.

Class of 1960-1961. That shouldn't ring any bell for the kids, until they reached the photos of the graduates. El was the first one to spot them.

"Hop!" she exclaimed, pointing at a bearded guy with a bad boy attitude. In fact, the name under the pic read James Hopper. "Oh, my God."

El pulled the yearbook closer to her, but now it had all the boys' attention, and Dustin pulled it to his side.

"Guys! Guys!" Steve tried to put some order in that mess.

"Wait, mom and Hop were in the same class together, weren't they?" Will asked, his arm coming from behind them and snatching the

yearbook from the others. They didn't even see him get up and sneak behind them. He carried it with him to his place between Lucas and Nancy. "Where is she?"

Will turned the page, and Joyce Murphy was the first on top. Her hair was really long and wavy, and she was wearing an artsy headband like the hippies. She looked pretty and young.

"We found Dad too," Jonathan told Will. "But he graduated in '59."

The Byers brothers shrugged equally, dismissing Lonnie like everyone knew he deserved, and Jonathan flipped a few pages more.

"That's not even the best part. Look at this," he pointed, putting the yearbook more in the middle of the table, and all the kids stood up to take a closer look.

All the photos in those pages, titled 'Memorable couples of Hawkins High', were in black and white and were taken in casual situations. It took them a heartbeat too long to understand what they were seeing: Joyce and Hop sat on a table just like that one they were sitting around, his arm around her shoulder, she leaning against his side, taking a drag of his cigarette. They were voted 'most likely to break up and get back together in a couple of decades: Murph and Hop'.

They were all smiling, and they sat back down thinking. That thing was incredible.

"It's been over two decades," Will observed and looked up at his brother. "Mom's single again."

"And Hop is kinda lonely," Steve said, making that puppy face of his as he looked from Will to Eleven. Jonathan threw his spoon at him.

"Stop it, it was a hella hard work to stop those two from playing cupid!" he protested.

"Oh, come on, Jonathan," Nancy interfered. "It was *your* idea to show them the yearbook; you mean to tell me that wasn't the intention?"

Jonathan crossed his arms, but didn't call on the lie. Nancy caught El and Will exchanging a look full of meaning.

"Look, all we're saying is," she continued. "That if you guys need a hand to get them together again, we might be able to help."

Will smiled and Eleven looked at Mike, who nodded reassuringly. She dropped her spoon on the cake plate and turned to Jonathan.

"What else can you find out through those books?" she asked, the longest phrase Steve had ever seen her speak in one go. All those games and TV shows and books she was in contact with, plus the constant contact with the boys was proving that she was quite the fast learner.

Jonathan and Nancy exchanged a look, and then he smiled. That would be fun.

12. May 1, 1985

May 1, 1985

Nancy parked in front of the post office in Indianapolis, but no one moved. In his hands, Mike fidgeted with the letters again.

Jonathan Byers, destination New York.

Steve Harrington, Florida.

Nancy Wheeler.

Maine.

They stayed still and silent for a long time. They had skipped class to go there, and the post office would close in three hours. They had time.

"Did you guys take the time to choose the furthest colleges from each other?" Mike asked, making Nancy smile.

"You'd really think so if I had chosen UCLA, huh?" she replied.

"Why Maine?" he wondered out loud. Maine was far and cold. Portland was big and loud. There were better history courses in other universities. He really didn't understand her motivations.

Nancy looked at Mike and he looked at her.

"Have you seen those *things* we had to fight off the past couple of years? I have this theory that maybe, if it's cold enough, they won't show up."

"Assuming that they're all reptile-like?" Mike asked and Nancy nodded. "You'd have to move to Canada, then."

"Yeah…" she breathed. "Greenland, maybe."

"Scandinavia," Mike turned to his sister. "Or become an American spy in Russia."

"That would be cool," she said.

"You already shoot like a pro," he pondered, and she blushed a little. "Damn, Nance, you're studying *history*, what the hell. What happened to pre-med?"

Nancy shrugged.

"Don't want it anymore."

"All those AP science classes."

"I don't want it anymore," she insisted, the letter from Boston University, her early entry, still burned on her eyes. She left it in the exact same place, in the first drawer of her nightstand. "I want to be an explorer, that's what I want to do."

Mike nodded. That was a good answer, at least for him. Maybe not so much for their father, but good enough for him, and it seemed like their mom understood too, or else Nancy would be mailing her answer to Harvard right now.

"I guess Holly is the only hope for someone in our family to actually make money, then, because I'm becoming a biologist," Mike said, and Nancy smiled again.

"You raise her right while I'm gone, okay?" she requested and he nodded. "Blue-eyed blonde with a tongue like hers, she has all the tools to be a mean girl."

"I will try my best, promise," Mike said and Nancy nodded.

They both looked over to the post office. Soon, it'd be rush hour, but right now the place was practically empty. Nancy had a decision to turn into reality.

"You're ready for this?" Mike asked. Nancy sighed.

"Actually, I am," she answered. She didn't take her eyes from the post office, and finally she nodded. "Let's go."

And they went.

13. August 7, 1985

Author's note: This one is for everyone who paid attention to my author's notes in 1985 heh

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August 7, 1985

"What was that about?" Nancy asked stopping at Mike's door two minutes after their mother left.

She *should* be getting ready for work, but she had heard the word 'condoms' when she passed by and it just fueled her curiosity. Mike looked a little green.

"The Talk," he groaned and Nancy just got confused.

"I thought you had to go through that a couple of years ago," she said, and he only groaned more.

"Yeah, but something happened," he said slumping on his chair. Nancy gasped.

"Michael!" she exclaimed. Mike got instantaneously red.

"Not to me!" he added quickly. "Dustin."

"That's even more impressive," she mumbled, a hand to her chest. For some reason, Nancy felt a little lightheaded. Her brother and his friends were *so young*.

"But that's not even why, I doubt any adult knows about him and Oksana," Mike continued, and Nancy had to lean against his doorframe to keep from losing her balance. She felt tempted to exclaim some shocked words like '*WHAT?*' several times, but managed to keep her mouth closed. "The problem was that El didn't have the Talk, so she knew nothing."

Nancy shook her head, trying to focus.

"Joyce talked to her," she said.

"Yeah, about periods and pads, not about sex," Mike replied, getting redder at each word. "She didn't understand anything Dustin was telling us, so she asked mom to give her the Talk yesterday."

Nancy's eyebrows went up, her jaw dropped.

"Mom?" she asked. "Not Hopper?"

"I told her to avoid asking him," he answered.

"Joyce?"

"Will advised against it."

"So she asked *our* mom?"

"Did you see that dad's mug is missing?" he observed. "She said she just wanted to make sure I 'knew exactly what I'm doing, too', and now I want *to die*."

Nancy chuckled.

"You regret telling El not to ask the Chief?" she asked, and Mike shook his head.

"No," he answered. "Yes. A little. I don't know."

"Well," Nancy said, standing straighter. She really needed to go get ready for work. "If El understands these kinds of things better now, maybe I should give *her* my Cosmos."

Nancy didn't think there was a way Mike could get redder. She thought wrong.

"Please, don't," he breathed, and she shook her head.

"I'm kidding, Mike," she assured. "You can just share all the archives you already own, they are very educative."

Mike groaned, hiding his face in his hands, and Nancy laughed. She had spent the past year and a half dropping ripped magazine pages, sometimes full magazines, on his table just to make sure that she was

raising a good, understanding boy, who'd be a good, understanding boyfriend. Nancy liked to think that she was doing something right.

She stepped back into the corridor still laughing, and Mike sighed. What a day to be alive, huh?

"I gotta go to work, but Mike?" Nancy said. He dared to look at her. "Breathe."

Yeah, he would certainly try. No promises were made.

14. November 26, 1985

November 26, 1985

Nancy thought it would take her a little more convincing when she called, but as soon as she said-

"You know, the kids have three extra tickets for the game this week."

-and Jonathan hummed, she knew she had found herself a date.

"You know how they got extra tickets?" he asked, and she couldn't help but smile.

"I heard Jennifer Hayes bullied some bullies to get them."

Jonathan confirmed.

"El was her back up," he said. "You're all 5'2" and you get things done, it's incredible. The girls make me so proud."

Nancy smiled. They had been invited, mostly, because they could drive, not because the kids actually wanted them there, but Nancy had never got to go to a professional basketball game in Indianapolis and that was her chance.

After driving early from college for Thanksgiving, and after Lucas's lunch party, Nancy got her mother's minivan with Mike and Lucas, Jonathan went with Will and El, and Grant was responsible for taking Dustin, Lexi and Jennifer. They arrived only half an hour before the game started, the first game of the season, against the Nets, and not all of them were excited about the game, but they were all thrilled to be there.

"Jon, Hop gave me the money to buy a jersey," said El, tugging at his sleeve. They looked over the packed store, and then he smiled at her.

"You have any number in mind?" she raised an eyebrow, and he nodded. "Right. I will see what I can do. You guys want anything?" he threw the question.

"FOOD!" was the general answer, and money was passed around.

"I'll go with you," Grant offered, leaving Nancy to take care of the kids.

She checked their tickets, and then counted the heads. Five. She counted again. There were supposed to be seven kids, but she was only counting five.

"Who's missing?" she asked. The kids looked around.

"Dustin," Will said.

"And Jennifer," added El.

"They were right behind us," Lexi said frowning.

"Didn't Dustin go with his brother?" suggested Mike. With the store packed, they couldn't make out who was who there.

"We passed by the restrooms, maybe they are there," Lucas reasoned, and Nancy nodded.

"Let's go find our seats," she said. "If they don't find us in 5, I'll go look for them."

Their seats were just a little shitty, but with a good angle to the court, so they didn't mind much. Nancy kept counting the kids until Dustin and Jennifer found them with still a minute on the clock before she'd have their names announced.

"Where the hell were you two?" demanded Lucas for her.

"Restroom," they answered at the same time innocently and Lexi glanced at El all the way from her seat at the very edge of their group. El frowned.

"I don't really understand when she looks at me like that," El whispered to Mike, and he rested a hand on her shoulder.

"It's an understanding thing," he explained. "The more you know each other, the more you'll understand her without words."

"Like you and I?" she asked. He nodded.

"And Lucas and Lexi, or you and Will. Just give it a little time."

El nodded. The arena was quickly filling up, and getting loud. Each seat had a bandana for the Pacers fans. Nancy had only seen that kind of thing at a Knicks game in New York, but she hadn't come to this arena before, so she couldn't know.

Jonathan and Grant came back with several bags of food that were distributed among everyone. Lucas and Jennifer were filling everyone with basketball trivia only minutes before the beginning of the game.

"Did you find it?" El asked Jonathan, and he smiled. She jumped up immediately, shrugging off the Clash jacket that Nancy was pretty sure was Will's.

"They didn't have an eleven, but I found a twenty-two," he said, taking a jersey from one of the bags.

"Two times eleven, nice!" Mike said, and El turned to him with a bright smile.

"Come on, baby sis," Jonathan said, putting the jersey over her head. She had chosen a tank top exactly because she wanted to wear the jersey during the game.

El looked down at her Pacers uniform. They were announcing the players and the arena trembled. She hugged Jonathan, and he kissed the top of her head. Jon always told Nancy that El was like a feline, she could be lethal, but if you rubbed her the right way, she'd purr.

"Thanks, Jon," she said.

"Hey, where is *my* jersey?" asked Will, and Jonathan rolled his eyes.

"You don't even like sports," he replied, and winked at Nancy.

"You neither, Byers?" Grant asked. "What are we even doing here?"

"It's Lucas's birthday, Grant!" Lexi shouted over the noise. The players were ready to play, the ball was about to go up. "Show some respect."

He sat down with his popcorn making funny faces at Nancy, Jonathan and Mike, who were sitting as well. They seemed to be the only ones, everyone else was standing up.

"I really don't understand how she got so into sports," Nancy said to Mike. He had never watched a full game of anything in his life, not even Holly's soccer, but he seemed oddly proud of El's passion.

"Clearly Hop," Mike told her. "Remember where he took her in her first week back?"

"Here?" she guessed. All she remembered was that it was something sporty.

Mike shook his head.

"Downtown, to watch the Super Bowl with his friends in a restaurant. She found it fascinating."

Nancy could see. She heard that El was voted MVP in the class tournament a couple of months ago, even with the broken leg. During her four years of high school, Nancy had never won anything at the class tournament.

"Hey, can you do me a favor?" asked Mike before he sipped his Coke. Nancy bit her hot dog and nodded. "Can you check on El to see what she'd like to get for Christmas? I've something in mind, but…"

"You need to stop giving her songs, Mike," she pointed out. "And girls need *things*."

"*I know*," he complained. "I'm not talking about songs."

"How many did you even write?" she questioned.

"Since I met her or since she came back?" he replied, and Nancy's eyebrows went up.

The arena erupted in noise, vibrating with energy and shouts. El turned to them, brown eyes shining, enchanted.

"Did you *see* that? Did you fucking see that?" she exclaimed, barely

able to keep her eyes from the court for too long. The Nets called a 20 seconds.

"Damn, that was *good*!" Lucas said, trying to be heard. He was right between El and Lexi. "If they play like this every game, they might even stand a chance to go to the playoffs."

"Wanna place a bet?" asked Jennifer. Lucas shook his head.

"I'm not delusional."

Nancy smiled. Jonathan put his arm around her shoulder, letting her lean against him. Mike, for once, tried to watch the game. She understood some of the rules, though she had only ever played softball in her life. Basketball was a bit of a big deal in Hawkins High and in Maine, but the season was only starting.

That was nice, Nancy thought. Too bad Steve couldn't come, though he had warned he wouldn't leave Florida's warm weather for nothing in this world. Jonathan's presence was enough, and she didn't mind going out with her baby brother. Some things in life were just simple.

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a/n: remember that time when readers left reviews? I miss that time : (

thanks for reading anyway ^^

15. New Years Eve, 1985

Author's note: So now we start to wander in unknown territory. I hope you enjoy this last third of the fic, and I'll already let you know that there WILL be a sequel, all right? Bear with me, guys.

Have a nice chapter :D

New Year's Eve, 1985

More than once, Nancy saw her mother going from one place to another trying to make sure that everything was in place. She tried to help as much as she could, but Karen Wheeler seemed to want to take control of every situation, she wanted everything to be perfect.

Rumor had it that the only time it went wrong was the year Mike was born. Nancy was only four, she didn't remember much. All she knew was that it was freezing cold, and that her mother wouldn't be able to finish preparing that delicious banana pie of hers, because she was in pain and had to be taken to the hospital.

Good thing grandma Sally and uncle Klay with his family were in town that year, even though uncle and father weren't very friendly. Nancy had entered 1971 without knowing that she was officially a big sister.

With the house filled with guests, and Jonathan taking pictures of everything, Nancy observed – the Hendersons had gone to California, to their older son Stu's house, but the Sinclairs and the Byers were there. Well, the Byers boys, for Joyce had decided to go back to her maiden name a couple of weeks ago. Chief Hopper showed up this time, which was incredible, he never had the time for these kinds of gatherings. The Harringtons went to Florida to stay with Steve. He didn't come home again. Nancy doubted that Steve would ever call Hawkins home again, he was perfectly fine staying far away from his father.

They planned to go down to Orlando during spring break, she and Jon. She hoped everything worked out, because she was looking

forward that trip.

"Have you seen Mike?" her mother asked suddenly appearing in front of Nancy, Holly attached to her hip.

"Hmm…" Nancy looked around, as if her mother hadn't done that already. "Have you checked the basement?"

"Yes."

Okay, she had to scan her brain to come up with something. She looked around again, and saw Lucas and Will in the living room. Hop and Joyce distracted. No sight of El.

She hummed, and offered to hold Holly.

"Try his bedroom," she said, and then turned to her baby sister. "You're getting too big to go from arms to arms, don't you think?"

Holly shrugged.

"I'm the baby," she said unashamedly, making Nancy laugh.

They watched their mother go upstairs and heard her knock at the door.

"Did you see Mike, Hol?" Nancy asked, and her sister nodded.

"He told me not to tell anyone," she whispered.

"Is he with El?" Holly nodded. "In his room?"

Holly said nothing, but the way she closed her mouth so fast gave her out. Gee, those kids were so forward. Her mother was coming back down already.

"Did you find him?"

Karen nodded severely.

"If he doesn't come down in two minutes, I'm picking his lock. I don't care it's his birthday, he's not disappearing on me like that," she said fiercely, and Nancy and Holly exchanged a look. Mom was pissed.

"What-" they heard Joyce exclaim, and Nancy turned to the living room. Her father was distributing champagne to the guests and Will took the glass from his mother's hand. "William!"

"El told me to not let you drink, so I'm not letting you drink," Will said, passing the glass to Mr. Sinclair. Joyce turned to Hopper, as if he could provide some explanation, but he only shrugged.

"How about we go get the firecrackers, Hol?" Nancy suggested putting Holly on the floor.

"Great idea!" her baby sister said, and they went to the basement to get everything.

As soon as they came back up, Mike and El were already in the living room again. The girl was barefooted and wearing one of Mike's dark jackets over her navy-blue dress, her hair a little messy, and Mike's hair was even messier; he had changed his jacket for a flannel shirt and was barefooted too, leaning against the doorframe that led to the hall. It was 11:30 and Holly occupied herself distributing the firecrackers to everyone.

"You look like you just had sex," Nancy commented, standing by her brother's side. He turned instantaneously red.

"I didn't," he answered, making sure to hush.

"Didn't you?" she pressed, just for kicks. She knew he wouldn't, not this soon, but the fact that he and El had hidden from everyone else to make out was too good a tease to be forgotten.

"No!" Mike hushed turning to her. Nancy narrowed her eyes as she spotted a red mark on his neck, partially hidden by the shirt. She held his chin so she could have a better look at that hickey.

"Okay, sure," she teased more, and he would reply, she was sure. Mike's specialty was to make a fool of himself trying to explain things that didn't need explanation, but he was saved by the small commotion that started in the middle of the living room.

"You're not supposed to drink that," El said, stopping Joyce midway to sipping a drink again and taking the glass from her.

"Ellie, what the heck!" exclaimed Joyce. She seemed really annoyed by the kids' little stunt. "Why am I not supposed to drink, I drink all the time!"

"But you shouldn't," El insisted.

"*Why the hell not?*"

By this point, everyone was looking over at them, but nothing caused quite the impact as El's next words.

"Because I've learned that alcohol is bad for babies."

Silence.

And then-

"What baby?" asked Joyce, really confused. El hesitated.

"Yours," El answered. Joyce laughed.

"I'm not pregnant," she said, as if it was obvious.

"Yes, you are," El replied, as if it was even more obvious. Mike and Nancy exchanged a look. Weren't women supposed to know when that happened?

"Mom, think about it," Will argued. Did Will know before everyone else too? Did El tell him that? "Are you *sure*?"

"Uh…" Joyce looked at her children, and then around before she finally looked at Hopper, who seemed in shock. Jonathan came closer to Nancy. He looked as confused as his mother.

"Did you know that?" Nancy asked Mike, who shook his head no.

"El was asking me about how it was to have a baby sister, but she didn't… say anything else."

"She obviously told Will," she said, watching the scene with attention. Holly came to stand between her siblings.

"What's going on, Mike?" she asked, big blue eyes filled with

confusion. Instead of answering, he just patted her blonde hair. He didn't want to miss anything, that was the most exciting New Year's Eve since… ever.

"I didn't think…" Joyce mumbled. "I'm forty-three, I didn't think I was pregnant."

"How does the girl know it and you don't?" Mrs. Sinclair asked, breaking the spell everyone seemed to be in. All eyes turned to El, so she looked over at Mike, who smiled at her.

"I pay attention," she said, which Nancy guessed was kind of true. El turned to Joyce again. "Will you stop drinking now?"

Joyce didn't answer, and Karen came to her, took her hand and led her to the kitchen. She probably could offer a tip or two about unexpected pregnancies. The Wheeler siblings looked down at their baby sister. The room filled with sound again as people resumed to their chats, and Hopper lead El to a corner, probably demanding some explanation.

"How did you know about it?" Jonathan asked Will when he and Lucas came closer to them.

"El told me," Will answered.

"You and you only," Mike said. Nancy could swear she caught some resentment in his tone, but that was something she'd talk to him about later.

"We wanted to make sure to take care of mom first," he explained, which was a good explanation. Their little broken family needed some internal care.

"You excited about it, Will?" Nancy asked, sensing the mood of the younger Byers. Will smiled, eyes shining and all.

"El said it's a girl. I think it's going to be fun."

"You bet," she guaranteed, and then she looked at Jonathan. His face was a mask, but she knew that he loved El so fast, he would certainly be excited about a new baby sister.

Hopper passed by them to go to the kitchen, El right after him, but she stopped when she reached the group of friends.

"Is he mad?" Will asked, and El shook her head.

"He's confused," she said frowning. "I don't understand why."

"Well, it's a lot to take in," Jonathan reasoned. El shrugged. The clock read 11:50.

"I guess," she said, and then she took Mike's hand. "Come, they are distracted."

Mike only had chance to look over at Nancy wide eyed before El dragged him out of there towards the basement and she made a mental note to tease him about it too.

16. January 3, 1986

January 3, 1986

"Your present is cool and all," Mike said dropping the already half-read book on Nancy's bed and laying down beside it as she separated and folded clothes that would go into her suitcase. "But do you know what mom and dad gave me?"

Nancy put the jeans she was folding on top of a pile of clothes and picked up the book she had given to him this time. For a change, she had chosen something Mike had announced he wanted, a hardcover of Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game*.

"What was it?" she asked, opening the book where he had bookmarked.

"They decided that it's time to remodel my room," he announced with a smug smile. "And they are letting me do it *my* way."

"Are you getting rid of all the action figures this time?"

Mike scoffed.

"As if," he said. "But I'm getting rid of the bunk bed."

"You are?" Nancy replied.

"Maybe change the wallpaper, get some new posters, figure out a way to display my guitar…"

"Where will El sleep if you won't have a bunk bed anymore?"

Mike looked at his sister, one eyebrow raised.

"Here," he said as if it was clear. "You are away for most of the year now."

It made sense.

"You're finally changing to a teenager room, then," Nancy said

smiling. She still was holding his book.

"I guess," Mike shrugged. "I definitely need a bigger bed."

"How long has it been you don't fit in your bed anymore?"

"A few months," he answered. He had outgrown all of his things right before school started and the bed was the only belonging he hadn't changed yet.

"About time, then," Nancy commented, reading the back cover of the book. "Is it really good?"

"Yeah, it is," Mike said, and she handed the book back to him. "Really good. Thanks, Nance."

"Definitely made it to the top two?"

Mike smiled and shook his head.

"Top three," he said, showing three fingers. "El gave me a pack of Moleskines."

"Damn," Nancy sighed. "Gotta up my game this year."

He nodded.

"You must," Mike agreed. "Holly's really close to the top four."

Nancy sat down on the bed by his side, her clothes and suitcase forgotten.

"Hol is going to conquer the world, you know?"

Oh, he knew.

"At least one of us should."

17. May, 1986

Author's note: This is the part where you guys say 'Oh, no.'

Be ready.

May, 1986

"*Tell me all the news*," Nancy said on the phone. She sounded hyped, as if something really exciting had just happened, but she beat Mike on asking for news.

"Uh…" he mumbled. He had been the one to call, but now that his sister had picked up, he didn't know where to start. "I got a job in the record store," Mike told her.

"*Really?*" she exclaimed, sounding excited. "*When did you start?*"

"I didn't," he answered. "Dad didn't let me. He got me an internship with him instead, said we'd spend some '*father-son quality time*' or whatever."

Nancy was silent.

"*So you're working with dad?*" she asked. Mike nodded, and then he remembered they were on the phone.

"Yes."

"*Doing what?*"

"Nothing exciting. Office work is *so boring*, and I'm being paid less than I'd be paid at the store."

"*Damn,*" she sighed. "*What about the car?*"

"Won't be able to buy it by December unless I find a way to make extra money."

Mike was a hundred percent sure that Nancy was shaking her head

all the way in Portland, Maine.

"*Dad's got to be the most clueless person in the world,*" she sighed. "*What did mom say?*"

"She told me to hold on, and to let her know if it becomes too overwhelming."

"*It's such a relief that mom's got our back,*" Nancy commented. "*How was Holly's birthday?*"

Mike smiled.

"She invited some friends over and there were way too many kids around for lunch, I thought they would never leave. El made magic tricks to keep them distracted. Mom bought a cake that wasn't nearly as delicious as her homemade ones. After everyone went home, Hol decided that she wanted to watch *Star Wars*. We saw all three movies and she didn't sleep through any of them."

"*Wow!*"

"Impressive, I know," he said. "I think she fell in love with Luke Skywalker."

Nancy sighed.

"*I don't blame her,*" she confessed, and Mike chuckled.

"Nerd."

"*Says who?*" Nancy joked and Mike scoffed.

"You know what I was thinking about? The day you introduced me to D&D."

On the other side of the line, Nancy laughed. She wasn't much of a player, but risked helping to write some campaigns with her middle school friends, and that's how Mike had gotten his hands on his first D&D book.

"*Busted,*" she admitted. "*What else's been going on?*"

Mike hummed. A lot had been going on, really.

"Are you coming over for summer?" he asked instead, not expecting her to bite it.

"*Yeah, I am,*" Nancy told him. "*You think that slot at the record store will still be open? I'll need a job while I'm in there.*"

"No, Will's got it. Though we have no idea how things will be after Callie is born, because El is going to hockey camp for a couple of months," Mike said all at once. Nancy sighed.

"*Is she excited?*" she asked.

"She who?"

"*El.*"

"Oh, yes. And she's going with Jennifer, who's been participating since ever, so she'll be fine."

"*And what about Joyce, is she excited with the new baby?*"

"She's stressed," Mike opted to be honest. "Because it's been so long and stuff, but Hop and El moved to their house, put the lake trailer for rent… they will be fine."

"*Oh, I'm sure,*" Nancy said. "*I think El will be a great big sister. How are you two, by the way?*"

"We're fine," Mike said quickly, and then he hesitated. "…Nancy?"

"*Mike.*"

He bit his lip, trying to think of the right words to put together.

"Have you ever felt like your life was limited? Like… there was someone limiting you?"

"*Mike, if dad is-*"

"No, it's not about dad," he cut her off and swallowed. "It's… personal. Have you felt that way?" Mike didn't give her space to

answer right away, though. "Or maybe that you were limiting someone else's life?"

Nancy was quiet for a moment.

"*I don't know, I don't think I've ever thought about it,*" she confessed. "*What's going on, Mike?*"

Mike sighed.

"Nothing. I'm just thinking."

"*Mike*."

"Remember that basketball game we went to last year for Lucas's birthday?" he opted to change the subject. Nancy hummed. She remembered. "Remember how Dustin and Jenny disappeared?"

"*Yeah,*" she said, clearly struggling to see his point.

"We think they are screwing," Mike said in one go. "I mean, it seems to be recent, but I don't know…"

"*What does it have to do with anything, Mike?*" wondered Nancy.

Well, a lot. It had a lot to do with a lot of things right now, but everything was speculation and half-said words, so he didn't have any solid answer to his sister.

"I'm just saying," he deflected. "They are acting weird."

"*I've yet to see Dustin* not *acting weird*," she observed, and Mike shrugged. Good point. "*I'm coming home soon, okay? And then we can talk better.*"

"Yeah, I know," Mike sighed. "You taking care?"

"*Always,*" Nancy guaranteed. "*You?*"

"My girlfriend has superpowers, Nance, I think I'm pretty safe."

The siblings chuckled, both knowing that they were keeping important things from one another, but struggling to actually talk

about what was happening. So much for telling each other everything.

"I'll see you in a few weeks?" he asked. She hummed. "Bye, sis."

"*Bye, baby brother*," Nancy replied. Mike hung up first.

18. June 23, 1986

Author's note: So here we start stepping in what will happen in my next fic, that will be the "official" sequel of *1985*. There are things from this chapter and on that will be better explored in the sequel, so if you hang on and read my next work, all the Is will be dotted. *wink*

Also, please don't hate me.

June 23, 1986

"Hey, where are they?" Jonathan asked out of breath. No one blamed him for not saying hello.

"Room twenty-nine," Lucas answered, and Jonathan ran to the corridor, ignoring everything else. By the time he turned the corner, Nancy finally entered the waiting room.

"We came as fast as we could," she said, dropping a backpack by a chair. "Hi, guys."

They all greeted her, and she sat by Mike's side.

"There was so much traffic in Ohio, I could swear we wouldn't make it in time," Nancy commented between deep breaths. It was as if she had ran there, instead of driven. "How long has it been?"

"Four hours," Mike answered, and she whistled.

"I'm not having kids," she declared. "Remember Holly? *Seven hours of labor*. That's mental. How's Joyce?"

"I don't know," Mike replied. "Only family allowed."

"But you *are* family, kind of," Nancy nudged him, but Mike just kept his mouth shut, no reply, no blush, no anything. "Mike?"

"Yeah?" he said, trying to keep it cool.

"What happened?"

He didn't say anything, kept his eyes ahead, watching the corridor. Nancy insisted.

"Mike," she waited for him to look at her, which didn't happen. "Everything okay?"

Nothing.

And then-

"No."

"Mike…"

"We broke up, okay?" he snapped turning to her, but still managed to keep his voice down.

Nancy gasped both because of the enormity of the news and the intensity of his eyes. Mike looked a lot like their uncle Klay with the dark eyes and hair, and the nose that was all from their mom's family. Even the way he talked with his eyes only, it was all Karen Wheeler.

"Why?" Nancy breathed. Mike swallowed.

"We decided, it's for the best," he told her. She didn't believe it. Couldn't.

"But…" she stuttered. "*How?*"

Mike sighed.

"There's a whole world out there, Nance, and she didn't see it yet."

Before he even finished talking, Nancy already was shaking her head.

"That's bullshit, Mike, and you know it."

"Do I, Nancy?" he replied full of sarcasm. She ignored his tone.

"How is this even going to work? You two are together all the time!"

"It's not going to be that hard," Mike told her. "I'm working most of the day, and she's going to camp in two days. Time will pass like that," he snapped his fingers. "And when you least expect, all will be in the past."

Nancy looked over and saw Dustin starring at them. He didn't seem very pleased about Mike's words either, and just shook his head disappointedly.

"You don't actually believe that, do you?" she asked, turning to her brother again, but before he could say anything, their parents arrived and she had to greet them, give Holly a tight hug and answer questions about finals and the drive back.

An hour later, Calista Hopper was born – grey eyes, pouty mouth and a thin layer of brown hair showing under her tiny pink hat -, and no one had time for anything else anymore.

That summer would be very different.

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a/n: pls don't kill me

19. August 25, 1986

Author's note: So, this is my favorite chapter. I'm not kidding, I love it. It was totally unscripted, came out of nowhere, and it's my favorite. From now on, the plot only thickens. We still have three chapters before we embark in the new fic (that I like to call "the final sequel"), so hold on a little longer, alright?

Thank you all for reading and reviewing, you rock!

August 25, 1986

It started with only Nancy sneaking out her window in the middle of the night to go nowhere. Ever since that Christmas, she had been watching the stars more often, and there was nothing like the summer sky.

Then came Mike looking for her for whatever reason. She guessed he saw her knees through the window or something, because he found her and snuck out, laid by her side on the garage's roof, but said nothing for a long time.

Finally, Holly showed up all attitude and fierce blue eyes under the heavy blonde bangs.

"I'm telling mom you're on the roof!" she exclaimed, sticking her head out the window. She was missing at least four teeth and couldn't help the lisp as she talked.

No one took her threat seriously.

"Come here, Fozzie," Mike invited, sitting up and reaching to help her out.

"I will fall," Holly pouted.

"You won't," he guaranteed. "I've got you. Come on."

Holly was a brave kid, she faced her fear of falling and got out that window, practically jumping in Mike's arms. He never stopped being

her favorite. She kept her arms tightly around his neck, and he patted her back gently, soothing her.

"The whole point of coming out here is to watch the stars, Hol," Mike said, his tone ever so gentle. He held her little arms, ushering her to let go.

Nancy just observed the exchange. Holly had grown so much the past couple of months, and she was just *so smart.* The little girl turned her head to look at Nancy, who smiled. That was what she was missing out on by moving all the way to Maine: the proximity with Holly.

She nodded once, and finally, Hol let go of Mike, let him put her between him and Nancy, and then he laid down again, her following suit.

No one said anything for a long time, but Holly sighed. She reached for Nancy's hand, but was leaning more against Mike, her head on his shoulder.

"Pretty," she sighed, and Nancy looked down at her, caressing the back of her small hand with her thumb.

"I have some books about stars, if you want to read about it," she offered, remembering of all the children books she collected from garage sales and second hand book fairs during her first years of school, back when she thought that astronomy was the only science that mattered.

Holly nodded, still staring at Hawkins' starry sky, and held Nancy's hand a little tighter.

They stayed there for a long time, so long that Holly fell asleep, curling by Mike's side, her left hand grasping at the fabric of his shirt above his chest. It felt nice, just the three of them.

"Nance?" Mike called keeping his voice down. She hummed to let him know she was listening. "Do you miss Steve?"

Odd question, but also a welcome one. Only a year had passed, and a lot had changed.

"We keep in touch," she answered. "More than I thought we would, to be honest, but yeah. I miss him. Why? Do *you* miss him?"

Mike made a face, and then-

"Maybe a little," he admitted, and Nancy laughed. Who would ever think, right? "It gets easier, though, right? Missing someone?" he continued.

Nancy had a feeling they weren't talking about Steve anymore.

"Yeah," she whispered. Most of times it was easy. "It does."

She tells herself that she won't say anything about it, but her self control only lasts a couple of minutes.

"When does she come back?" Nancy asked. She dared to look at him and saw his smile. *That's right, baby brother, can't hide from me*.

"Tomorrow," he answered, and she nodded.

"You stupid kids," Nancy joked. "You'll be fine."

She hoped he believed her.

"Mike?" Holly called sleepily, raising her head. She had drooled a bit, maybe she even dreamed. "Can we go to bed now?"

Mike smiled, patting her hair down.

"Of course, Fozzie, come on," he sat up, bringing her with him. "Want me to read something for you to sleep?"

She nodded.

"Captain Marvel," she said more sleepy than awake, and Mike looked back at Nancy.

"Okay, nerd," he joked, and helped Holly back in the house through the window. Duty called.

Nancy stayed outside. She wanted to watch the stars some more while she could.

20. September 1, 1986

September 1, 1986

"You okay?" asked Mike, thinking twice about giving Nancy one of the ice cream cones he was holding. "You look a little green."

"I'm fine," Nancy answered without meeting his eyes. She was distracted; it took her a while to finally look at him. "You got the mint and chocolate that I asked for?"

"Yeah, here," he offered. Hers was the only green cone. She didn't even need to ask. "Are you sure you're alright?"

"Yeah, I'm great!" she exclaimed, maybe a little too excited, and then she frowned at the other two cones he was holding.

"What is this?" Nancy pointed to the yellow and purple one.

"Pineapple and blueberry," Mike answered. "It's Spencer's."

Nancy made a face.

"*Pineapple and blueberry*?" she echoed disgusted. The Wheeler household was a chocolate ice cream family. "Mike, that girl couldn't be more different from you."

Mike groaned.

"Don't start again, for the love of God," he begged.

"Seriously, what is going on between you two? You're dating dad's boss's daughter or what?"

"I'm not," he explained for the millionth time. " She works reception, I'm with dad, and we're the only teens in that goddamn place, we just talk."

"And go out during sunny holidays and stuff," Nancy provoked. "Is that your big plan to get over El?" Before Mike could reply, Spencer finally showed up with a bottle of Coke.

Mike offered her the ice cream cone and she gladly accepted it. She took a bite and then a sip of Coke, her sunglasses reflecting the silent siblings in front of her.

"Some combinations are just perfect, aren't they, Mike?" Spencer wondered as they started walking down the avenue. He didn't see the way Nancy raised an eyebrow, and if he had seen, it'd just bother him.

Spencer Hall was a nice person and a good friend, the only one who made his days of work during summer not horrible. She wasn't from Hawkins, but from Indianapolis, and her father was his father's boss. Mike wasn't trying to *get over El*, he was just moving on – and that *didn't* mean he was dating anyone else.

"I'm not a big fan, but our baby sister Holly puts Coke in everything if we let her," he answered after biting his ice cream.

They stopped on the corner where Spencer had parked her car. It was getting late, even though the sun was still up and still very warm outside, the drive back was a good forty minutes. She turned to Mike and chuckled.

"Uh… you have some…" she stuttered, pointing at Mike's face and he rushed to wipe at the left corner of his mouth. Spencer chuckled more. "Here," she put her Coke on top of her car and reached to help him. It was the other corner that was dirty with ice cream and chocolate topping, and she used her thumb to clean it. Mike hoped to God that he wasn't blushing. Nancy looked to the other side just to roll her eyes without being judged.

"Thanks," Mike managed to say, and to his surprise, Spencer blushed. Since she had sunglasses on, he couldn't know what her eyes were saying, but it was okay.

"I…" she mumbled looking down. "Gotta go. I'll see you tomorrow at work?"

"Yep," Mike answered. Spencer opened the driver's door and he got her Coke bottle for her. "If I survive the first day of school."

"Oh, come on, Mike," she smiled.

"No, you don't understand," he said, offering her the bottle. She put it on the passenger seat. "We have this class tournament thing that is *brutal*. Last year, my g-, my friend El had her leg broken and all."

"Damn!" Spencer exclaimed surprised. "Well, I hope you survive, then," she said, squeezing his hand quickly, and then she got in the car. "Have a safe drive back to college, Nance!"

Nancy, who was distracted again, only nodded and waved a goodbye.

"Cheers," she mumbled, looking at Mike, who was narrowing his eyes at her.

"Drive safe," he said to Spencer, closing the door for her. She smiled. "See you tomorrow."

She drove away, still eating her ice cream, and Mike watched her go in her Mercedes. When he looked at Nancy, she had both eyebrows up.

"*Uh, Mike, you have some-*" she joked, making him roll his eyes. "How come you attract so many older girls? It's such a mystery."

"Shut up."

She couldn't.

21. November 2, 1986

Very important author's note: Hey guys! There are a few important things happening this week that I want to tell you all. **First**, it's the Mileven week, and I'm participating with 4 prompts that I hope you guys go check them out. **Second**, it's *Comic Con Experience* this weekend, and I'm going 3 of the 4 days! My children won't be participating, but there are other panels I want to watch, including the *3%* panel (have you watched it already? Go watch it, seriously!). **Last thing**, I've 2 exams and one narrative to make until the next 5th, so all that put together means that I won't be able to post the sequel before next week. But it will be posted, I promise!

Now, for the chapter, because you all deserve it! :D

November 2, 1986

"*I think Holly might have a crush on Will,*" Mike said on the phone.

"Oh?" Nancy exclaimed. "Evidence?"

"*She said to me, and I quote: 'Will should be Luke Skywalker, because he's cute'.*"

Nancy scoffed.

"That's not having a crush, Mike, that's common sense," she said rolling the cord of the public phone of the dorms around her finger. She could bet her bus money that he was rolling his eyes. "Who were you this year?"

"*Han Solo,*" he answered. "*Hol was Yoda, El was Leia.*"

Nancy hummed. She could form a better theory as to why Holly had chosen Will to be Luke, and it had more to do with Skywalker twins than with who was cute or not.

"*The thing was that it kinda fucked with the group's plans, because we wanted to match for the party, all seven of us, but Holly didn't budge. Star Wars doesn't have enough impressive characters, the protagonists list is*

quite short. So half of us went as Star Trek characters for the Seniors' Halloween Party, and Jenny was Supergirl because she got tired of the costume fights."

"Wow, what was the theme this year?" Nancy asked.

"*Heroes and Villains,*" Mike answered. "*But they had this weird rule where no one else could go as villains, like… only a senior could be Darth Vader, or the Penguin, you know? Kinda boring.*"

"Who organized it? Preston Telles?"

"*I guess,*" he said. "*I mean, she* is *a senior now.*"

"Yeah, she's been trying to suggest that theme for *any* party ever since I still was in school, talk about creativity."

"*Or persistence,*" Mike suggested. He was silent for a while and Nancy looked back, smiled to the person behind her. There was more people waiting to use the phone, and she already had used a few nickels. "*Something weird happened, Nance. At the party.*"

"Define weird," Nancy said. "You're in Hawkins, after all."

"*You see, only seniors could be villains, but there was this person no one could figure out who as the Riddler? And it made Patty really mad, because apparently she'd been putting her Riddler costume together since always, which is very depressing because it was* not *good. Seriously, how hard is it to get some green suit, or green spandex and add some question marks to it?*"

"Mike," Nancy cut. "Point."

"*Right,*" he answered. "*There was a foreign Riddler, Patty P. flipped out, tried to literally rip the person's costume and you won't* believe *who was underneath the hat.*"

Mike paused. He paused for so long that Nancy had to add another nickel.

"Well, who?" she asked, as soon as the call came back.

He took a deep breath. She braced herself.

"*Barb. Holland,*" Mike said, pausing between words. "*I mean, is this the year of the miracle? She's the third person who shows up after being assumed dead in just four months! Did you know that she was okay? Nancy?*"

But Nancy's head was somewhere else, in the dark alley downtown during Labor Day, and the way Barb just showed up out of the blue looking exactly the same and someone else completely at the same time, and the way she just grinned as she greeted. *Hey, Nance.* As if she hadn't died. As if Nancy hadn't been grieving her best friend for the past three years.

"*Nancy?*" Mike insisted.

Barb wasn't wearing her glasses that day. Her hair was longer and shinning red.

"*Nancy!*" he called one more time, and she blinked.

"Holy shit," she said under her breath.

"*I know,*" Mike agreed.

"What did El say?"

"*She's nervous, but she won't talk much. But I will try to get something from her, because last time she got like that, there was a breech in the middle of the woods letting a monster come and go.*"

"Did you try to talk to Barb?" Nancy asked. She had to.

"*Lucas is on it,*" Mike informed. "*Nance?*"

"Yes?"

"*Be careful, okay? If I get any news, I'll tell you.*"

"You better," she replied. The person behind her cleaned their throat. "I gotta go, baby brother. You take care of yourself, all right?"

"*Always do.*"

They hung up.

22. December 18, 1986

Author's note: So it ends here. But it doesn't really ends, you all know, because I already told you there will be a **sequel**. Its name will be "**they just like to fight**" and it will be VERY different from what you guys saw me write so far. It's also going to be longer, so I'll have to ask for your patience, because there won't be such a thing as a chapter every two or three days anymore, unfortunately :(

Also, as I said before, I won't be posting anything else this week because I'm going to the Comic Con Experience tomorrow, and I have a linguistics exam on monday :(But next week I'm back! Meanwhile, you can check my "*small concepts*", written for the Mileven Week. And of course I want to know what you thought of this ending and what you expect to see in the sequel. It's very epic in my head, but I don't know if I'll be able to write something epic. Probably not. We'll see.

Anyway. Thank you all so very much for following me in this little journey, favoriting, leaving kudos, reviewing and everything you can do to show me that you're liking - or not - the story. You have no idea how much your feedback means to me, I'm serious. Now, enough talking and off to the chapter. And let's hope and pray that Netflix brings some ST content to their panels at the CCXP because I miss my babies!

December 18, 1986

Nancy walked on autopilot reading the article one of the archeology teachers had published a couple of years ago. She had a folder filled with articles and magazine issues talking about the same thing, even if slightly. She knew she was jeopardizing her study time, considering that her finals would be next week, but there was only so much a girl could learn about the thirteen colonies.

"WHEELER!" Someone called her before she could reach into her purse to get her keys. Nancy looked over, and one of her neighbors was coming in her direction. "You're Nancy Wheeler, right?"

Nancy nodded. The girl jogged closer, her short black hair falling on

her forehead.

"Your brother called. You have a brother called Mike, right?"

"Yeah," Nancy answered, folding the article with one hand only and shoving it in her folder. "When did he call?"

"This afternoon," she said. Nancy felt kind of bad for not knowing her name now.

"This *afternoon*?" she echoed, shaking her head. Mike knew that she wouldn't be at the dorms during the afternoon, why would he call anyway? "Well, I will call him back, thanks for letting me know."

"No, he left a message," her neighbor said, stopping Nancy from turning the knob. "He actually sounded kinda weird. Nervous, I guess."

"What is it?" Nancy interrupted, feeling nervous herself. "What did he say?"

"It doesn't make much sense, really, but…" she saw how anxiously Nancy was looking at her, and then she talked. "He said that… the lights… were blinking again?"

The words hit Nancy like a punch in the stomach and she gasped, dropping everything she was holding. She didn't see the way her neighbor peaked at the articles with a furrowed brow as she picked them up for her, she was too busy trying to breathe.

"Is that like a sibling code or something?" the girl asked, handing Nancy's things back to her. She got them with numb fingers. "The lights are blinking again," she said again, and finally Nancy breathed.

"Oh God, not again."